3/3/70

Dear Howard,

Until the mail comes, I'm going to try and answer the letters I got yesterday. I will not start Fillinger until I can go straight through it.

2/24, to me: NO transcripts: I've already started a set in circulation. Hoch has them. Bullets hitting ground: agreed, as you know from my handling of Liebeler/Rachley, and our discussions. I think there is some of this in there. But I encourage you to regard all these witnesses with the most jaundiced eye, not to be carried away because they may say what you want. I do not believe some of them could have seen what they report.

Slits and base: I've been engaged in a hassle on this with the Archives for a long time. I've completed the summary you started, will be typing it as soon as I can and going from there. My requests here remain unanswered.

Under Bishop: be careful not to fix a wishful-thinking interpretation to the cited testimony. Else where you quote incompletely from WWII and Sibert-O'Neill. They made a cursory, visual examination as soon as-while they were-unwrapping the body. Was this not a minimum necessity? I think there is no need to read a conspiratorial interpretation into this and reason not to, in the absence of real reason to the contrary. This you do not cite. How could they determine which pictures and X-rays to order before cutting without such an examination? They studied the wound enough to have no doubt there had been a tracheotomy, for example. You do not quote this from S-O. And the interpretation you put on emptying the room is also not what I would. Do I not total 25 people still there, afterward? Not all simultaneously, but still close to a record, if such attendances are recorded. Too many for the clandestine removal of a bullet, and the wrong ones: Kellerman would not have been silent. Also, there was not enough time for what you postulate, not for the kind of examination it would have required, the kind that really they knew they had to do after film was exposed.

There has never been any doubt in my mind that the bullet hit bone. The possibilities are quite limited: spine or rib (PMIII). Dick, who is expert on bullets where I am not considers certain kinds could have fragmented without hitting bone. I believe bone was hit, know it must have been with a jacketed bullet like the official villain, and have Cyril to support me. I took this up with Jim more than a year ago.

Bonner: he book adds nothing to what we know, nothing we might consider as probative in bearing on the evidence. Its sole possible positive value lies in its role, as semi-official police apology. But she is so completely unaware of what happened, so completely a police buff and willing to say anything, no matter how ridiculous, even here nothing she says can be accepted without independent confirmation. Sorry the carbon was so blurred. I expect no answer. I was making a record, that is all. Unless there is ground for bothering the publisher/distributor, which I did, also without response.

2/24 to Dick and me: agreed on "deliver". Not Humes' handwriting. And the only case. We also know the three of them and at least Galloway went over this together. It does not mean that someone else was engaged in the actual writing of the draft. Rather, in the editing. I think it is also interesting that this ended with the first case. In 1964 I made a word-wor-word comparison of the two versions, but I have misfiled it and haven't seen it since....I also could have been the typists, if she were told to make this change...I will not use Fillinger material...

2/26-both: quote of S-Φ. I prefer my interpretation (PM or WWII), that all non-military personnel were put out. Go over my list of who remained. All four agents did remain.

2/27, me: Slides: agreed. Do you think residues still remain? Now that I think of it, there may be other values in the color. Having gotten them to make slides, which are within reach, instead of only color prints, I think this may help in out disagreement on interpretation with Dick.

McN-Allman: there already remains nothing of the contention LHO was at the Depot scene on time.

Specter-Shaneyfelt: I do not know what you have in mind. I go into this in both first books, extensively in the second. Perhaps something there may help you. I also suggest that while neither witness can be regarded as innocent of what Specter was up to, it is even less possible with Shaneyfelt. He had to know and understand exactly what Specter was doing - and avoiding. There is another thing about Sh you should bear in mind. He has a protection Shanes does not: he was testifying about only what he had done. Unless you know what his instructions were-and they were very limited- you may inhibit yourself here. He was never told to either investigate or solve the crime. When the time comes, Dick and I will better understand what you are up to and can then offer opinions either way.

Back wound: you reflect incompletely what I told/showed you. It is I who told you to test this on your father, Were you onto any of this before me? I used the word "duplicating" on purpose. It is not, for example, stealing. You have taken my work, what I told you about, and are duplicating it by picture-taking you had not done before I told you. Think this over for yourself. Going back to your first visit here and what I showed you. If you will stop and ask yourself another question, what do the pictures add to my work? Nothing, really. They are at best a visual representation and,,as I wrote you last night, that was already done by Forman.

I do not care about the shirt slits, but it is I who first raised this with Dick and Gary in arguing about a front-entrance. If you got it from Dick's correspondence, this is how he got it. He originally (perhaps still does, I do not recall) felt otherwise, as everyone did. But be circumspect. I suspect the hassle I'm making on the pictures is enough to alert. I also think I have this in Rt III. What you added here, if I recall, is the unused doctor. If I get the pictures I'm trying to get, I'll let you see them. You are correct, I do not recall ever knowing that Hoover gave Harper slides to the WC because the Archives told me otherwise back in mid-1966, when I discovered that...

By now you should have Fisher's letter and my reply. You will now also see the great value of your letter, which establishes the existence of at least some of the records as a matter or fact rather than logic...I think you'd have enjoyed my phone conversation with Rolapp, who has been most grevously misinformed and, if he does what I suggested, will learn it. It remains to be seen what influence, if any, this has on Gim/Kleindienst/Mitchell. etc. ..Would I have loved to have been with Fisher when he got my letter! Second, that is.

Howard, I am not offended by the back-wound stuff, and, with more years to draw upon than you, understand what perhaps you cannot, for nothing substitutes for experience. I also have other things than have made explicit in mind, and in time you will learn this for yourself. I'll give you a hint: I'm thinking of you more than me.

The mail should be here now. Best regards, and my complements to a patient model. Why not take advantage of him and measure the possible variations? Best.